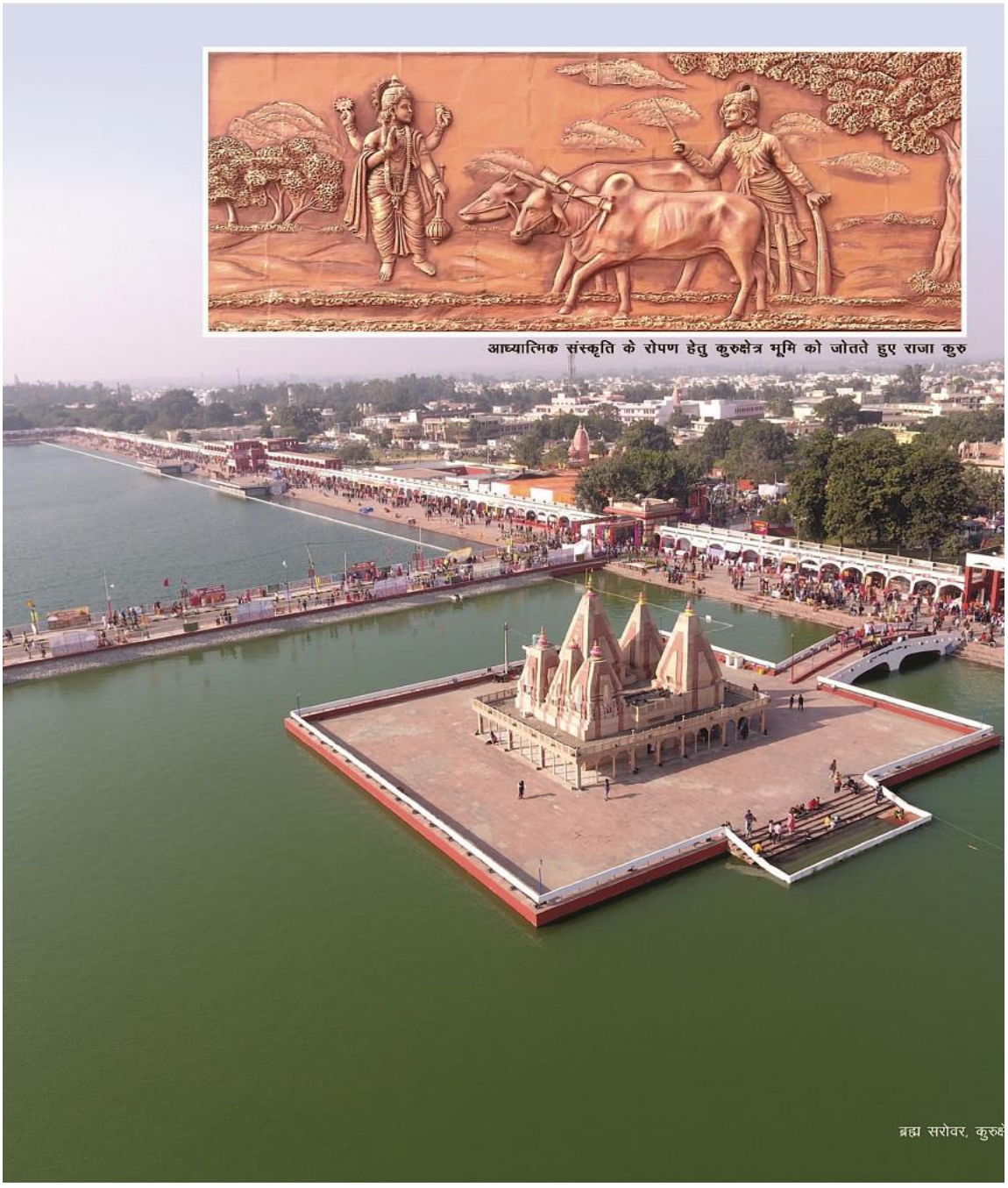
# Kurukshethra Darshana




(Brahma Sarovar - Kurukshetra)

**Kurukshetra** has been described in the first verse of **Shrimadbhagvadgita**, as **DharmakshetrE KurukshetrE** – the region of Dharma.

According to the Puranas, Kurukshetra is a region named after King Kuru, the ancestor of Kauravas and Pandavas in the Kuru kingdom, as depicted in epic Mahabharata.
The Kurukshetra War of the Mahabharata is believed to have taken place here.

Kurukshetra is described not as a city but as a region ("kshetra" means "region" in Sanskrit). The boundaries of Kurukshetra correspond roughly to the central and western parts of the state of Haryana and Punjab. According to the Taittiriya Aranyaka 5.1.1., the Kurukshetra region is south of Turghna (Srughna/Sugh in Sirhind, Punjab), north of Khandava (Delhi and Mewat region), east of Maru (desert), and west of Parin.

According to the Vamana Purana, King Kuru chose land at the banks of the Sarasvati River for embedding spirituality with eight virtues: austerity (Tapas), truth (Satya), forgiveness (Kshama), kindness (Daya), purity (Shuddha), charity (Daana), devotion (Yajna), and conduct (Brahmacharya).
Lord Vishnu was impressed with the acts of King Kuru and blessed him with two boons—first, that this land forever will be known as a Holy Land after his name as Kurukshetra (the land of Kuru); second, that anyone dying on this land will go to heaven.

The land of Kurukshetra was situated between two rivers—the Sarasvati and the Drishadvati.

Kuru Kingdom, founded by King Puru—the ancestors of Kauravas and Pandavas.

Kurukshetra is an important Hindu pilgrimage destination, and there are several pilgrimage sites surrounding the city.

Kurukshetra is a vast area spread over 48 kos parikrama (roughly 90-km) traditional circle (Parikrama) around the holy city which includes many pilgrimage places, temples and sacred ponds, with which many events/rituals associated with Pandavas, Kauravas and Mahabharata war.

Kurukshetra is closely related to its development with the rise of Aryan civilization and the sacred Saraswati. This is the land where Manusmriti was written by Rishi Manu and the compilation of **Rigveda**, Samaveda by the wise Rishis. According to Manu, the tract between the old sacred rivers **Saraswati** and **Drishadvati** in Kurukshetra was known as **Brahmavarta.**

**Kurukshetra in Theertha Prabandha** (Sri VadiRajaru)

श्रीभीमसेनकरकञ्जगदाप्रहारै श्चूर्णीकृताश्वगजपत्तिमृदुग्रपिण्डम् । उत्खातपार्थशरसस्यपदं कुरूणां क्षेत्रं दिशासु विततान सुकीर्तिध्यानम् ।। ३८ ।। kurukshetra – in which horses, elephants and soldiers which were ground to pieces by the hits from the gadaa held by the lotus-like hands of sri bhimasena are verily like lumps of soil, which in turn became ground for planting arrows of arjuna as if they were crops – cultivated grains known as sukeerti (excellent fame).

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**17. Kurukshetra :** One can reach Kurukshetra by bus or train from Delhi and Hardwar. The great saint Viswamitra became Brahmarishi here. The great Mahabharatha battle between the Pandvas and Kaurvas was fought here. Geethacharya Srikrishna delivered his Divine message "The Geetha" to mankind through Arjuna here. the Vishnusahasranama originated here. During solar / lunar eclipses, Sri Krishna used to visit the place to have a holy bath in Brahma-Sarovara. *Mahabharata Tatparya Nirnaya* mentions a yaga which Sri Krishna performed for 12 years here. Acharya Madhva on his way to Badri visited Kurukshetra and identified the weapons used by him in his earlier birth as Bhima during Mahabharata war to Sri Satya Theertha and other disciples. There is a gigantic tank here known as " Brahma Sarovara " Even today, lakhs of people take a holy dip in Brahmasrovara during festive occasions and eclipses. Vadiraja describes Kurukshetra in one sloka.

Farmers after levelling the land
Plant the seeds, and after
Proper cultivation, the crops secured are heaped up
Likewise Bhima, slays the elephants
Horses and army of Kaurava
And Arjuna on this smooth earth
Plants the seeds through arrows
Abundant crops by name "fame"
Spread in all directions. 38

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# धर्मक्षेत्र-कुरुक्षेत्र

कुरुक्षेत्र भारत का सुप्रसिद्ध धार्मिक स्थान है और विश्व के प्राचीनतम तीर्थस्थलों में से एक है। सदियों से ही नगर में सर्वसाधारण तीर्थयात्रियों का अनवरत प्रवाह रहा है। कुरुक्षेत्र वैदिक आर्य संस्कृति की पोषक स्थली, महाभारत युद्ध की रणभूमि तथा श्रीमद्भगवद्गीता की जन्मस्थली के रूप में विख्यात है। यहीं भारतीय संस्कृति में व्यापक समरसता एवं चिन्तन के बीज बोए गए थे और यहीं पर हिन्दुत्व के प्राचीन संवेगों ने मानवीय आत्मा को इस व्यवस्थित संसार से परे एक नई और अटूट एकता की शिक्षा भी दी थी। प्राचीन काल में कुरुक्षेत्र दक्षिण में सरस्वती और उत्तर में दृषद्वती नदियों के मध्य में स्थित था। इसकी भौगोलिक स्थिति वर्तमान कुरुक्षेत्र नगर तक ही सीमित नहीं थी। इसका क्षेत्र 48 कोस तक हरियाणा के वर्तमान ज़िलों कुरुक्षेत्र, कैथल, करनाल, जींद और पानीपत तक फैला हुआ था। इसके चारों कोनों पर चार यक्ष स्थित थे जो इस पावन क्षेत्र की आक्रमणों और प्राकृतिक आपदाओं से रक्षा करते थे।

लोक मान्यताओं के अनुसार कुरुक्षेत्र का नामकरण संवरण और ताप्ती के पुत्र और कौरव व पाण्डवों के पूर्वज राजा कुरु के नाम पर पड़ा। वामन पुराण के अनुसार राजा कुरु ने जिस भूमि को शिव के बैल नन्दी तथा यम के भैंसे की जोड़ी से आध्यात्मिक संस्कृति की खेती के लिए जोता था वही भूमि कुरुक्षेत्र कहलाई। जब राजा के समक्ष इन्द्र प्रकट हुए और पूछा कि वह क्या कर रहे हैं? तो राजा ने उत्तर दिया कि वह तप, सत्य, क्षमा, दया, शुचिता, दान, योग एवं ब्रह्मचर्य युक्त अष्टाँगमहाधर्म की खेती कर रहे हैं। पुनः विष्णु ने प्रकट होकर राजा से क्षेत्रमें रोपित किए जाने वाले बीजों के विषय में पूछा तो कुरू राजा ने उत्तर दिया कि ये अष्टाँगमहाधर्म के बीज उसके स्वयं के उनके शरीर में स्थित हैं। तब भगवान विष्णु ने राजा के शरीर को हज़ारों टुकड़ों में विभक्त कर दियाऔर वे राजा द्वारा जोते गए क्षेत्र में बिखर गए। राजा के आत्म बलिदान से अभिभूत भगवान विष्णु ने कहा कि अब से राजा द्वारा जोती गई सम्पूर्ण भूमि को धर्मक्षेत्र–कुरुक्षेत्र के नाम से जाना जाएगा। यहाँ के पवित्र जल में डुबकी लगाने, यज्ञ–हवन आदि करने और वेद–शास्त्रों का पाठ करने वालों के लिए यह क्षेत्र एक ऐसा उत्कृष्ट धार्मिक स्थान होगा कि जो भी यहाँ जीवन त्याग करेगा उसे मोक्ष की प्राप्ति होगी।

स्थानीय मान्यताओं के अनुसार सरस्वती और दृषद्वती नदियों द्वारा सीमित इस पवित्र कुरुक्षेत्र में 360 तीर्थ स्थल हैं। महाभारत में कुरुक्षेत्र को पृथ्वी के उत्कृष्ट तीर्थ स्थल के रूप में माना गया है। इस क्षेत्र की ख्याति दक्षिण–पूर्व एशिया के अनेक देशों तक भी पहुँच चुकी थी। लाओस देश में वात फाऊ नामक ऐतिहासिक स्थल से 5वीं शती ई. के उत्तरार्द्ध में उद्धृत शिलालेख प्राप्त हुआ है। इसमें कुरुक्षेत्र नामक पवित्र धरा का उल्लेख किया गया है। यह शिलालेख इस तथ्य को भी प्रमाणित करता है कि लाओस के राजा देवानिक ने नये कुरुक्षेत्र नाम से एक धार्मिक क्षेत्र का निर्माण किया था।

कुरुक्षेत्र का धार्मिक महत्त्व मध्यकाल में भी प्रचलित था। मध्यकालीन इतिहासकारों के अनुसार कुरुक्षेत्र हिन्दुओं का उस श्रेणी का उपासना स्थल था, जिस श्रेणी का मुसलमानों के लिए मक्का।

यहाँ पर अनेक ऐतिहासिक एवं सांस्कृतिक महत्त्व के पुरातात्विक स्थल हैं। जैसे वर्धन शासकों की प्राचीन राजधानी थानेसर, भगवानपुरा, राजा कर्ण का टीला, मिर्ज़ापुर और दौलतपुर आदि। इन स्थलों के उत्खनन से महान भारतीय सभ्यता की गाथा प्रकट हुई है। मिट्टी की भग्न कलाकृतियाँ, भवनों के खण्डहर और अन्य पुरा–वस्तुएं विगत पाँच हजार वर्षों से इस क्षेत्र की इतिहास की निरन्तरता पर प्रकाश डालती हैं।

# कुरुक्षेत्र में सूर्य उपासना

कुरुक्षेत्र भारत में सूर्य उपासना के प्राचीनतम स्थानों में से एक है। 48 कोस कुरुक्षेत्र भूमि में लगभग एक दर्जन से अधिक स्थल सूर्य उपासना से सम्बन्धित हैं। इन स्थानों के पवित्र तीर्थ सरोवर सूर्यकुंड कहे जाते हैं जो कि भगवान सूर्य को समर्पित हैं। पौराणिक साहित्य में सूर्यग्रहण के समय इन सूर्यकुण्डों के जल में पवित्र स्नान सैंकड़ों अश्वमेध यज्ञों के पुण्य के समान माना गया है।

भागवत पुराण के अनुसार एक बार सूर्यग्रहण के अवसर पर श्रीकृष्ण, बलराम और द्वारका से बहुत से प्रजाजनों के साथ कुरुक्षेत्र आए थे। इस अवसर पर भारत के मत्स्य, उशीनर, कौशल, विदर्भ, श्रृंजय, कम्बोज, कैकेय, कुन्ती, अनर्त आदि भारत के अनेक राज्यों के शासक भी आए थे। इसी अवसर पर गोकुल ब्रज से नन्द और यशोदा भी अन्य गोप–गोपियों संग कुरुक्षेत्र आए थे। वह सभी श्रीकृष्ण से मिलकर प्रसन्न हुए। उनकी आँखों से प्रेम की अश्रुधारायें बहने लगी। कृष्ण और बलराम को नन्द और यशोदा ने गले लगा लिया। ब्रज की गोपियों ने दीर्घकाल के बाद मिले कृष्ण को गले से लगा लिया और उसके ध्यान में लीन हो गईं। कृष्ण उनकी यह दशा देखकर उनसे एकान्त में मिले और उनकी कुशलक्षेम पूछी। कृष्ण ने गोपियों को बताया कि दुष्ट विरोधी राजाओं के दमन में व्यस्त होने के कारण ही इतने दीर्घकाल तक उनसे दूर रहना पड़ा। तथापि कृष्ण ने पूछा कि क्या गोपियाँ उन्हें कृतघ्न मानकर भूल तो नहीं गई हैं? फिर उन्होंने सान्त्वना देते हुए कहा कि उनकी आत्मीयता उन्हें सदा उनके साथ संयुक्त रखेगी। गोपियों ने कृष्ण को ब्रह्माण्ड का रचियेता मानते हुए उनके प्रति अपनी श्रद्धा व्यक्त की।

# सरस्वती

## प्राचीन कुरुक्षेत्र की जीवन रेखा

वैदिक काल की सबसे महत्त्वपूर्ण नदी सरस्वती ने भारत की महान सभ्यता को पोषित किया है। यह महान नदी हिमालय से निकल कर मैदानी क्षेत्रों में से होती हुई दक्षिण–पश्चिमी दिशा में वर्तमान पंजाब, हरियाणा, राजस्थान और गुजरात में से होते हुए अरब सागर में जा मिलती थी। इसे उस काल की नदियों मे से सर्वोच्च माना जाता है।

शिवालिक में आदि बद्री से लेकर भटनेर रेगिस्तान तक सरस्वती और दृषद्वती नदियों के किनारों पर अनेक ऐतिहासिक और सांस्कृतिक महत्त्व के पुरातात्विक स्थल हैं। इनमें से सौ स्थल हड़प्पा सभ्यता से पूर्व, पचास से अधिक स्थल विकसित हड़प्पा काल और लगभग तीन सौ स्थल उत्तर–हड़प्पा काल से सम्बद्ध हैं। अधिकतर स्थल सरस्वती और इसकी सहायक नदियों की घाटी पर स्थित हैं।

उपरोक्त पुरातात्विक स्थलों से अलग आदि बद्री से सिरसा तक सरस्वती नदी और इसकी सहायक नदियों पर कई अन्य तीर्थस्थल स्थित हैं जिनका उल्लेख महाभारत एवं अनेक पुराणों में मिलता है। कुरुक्षेत्र और पिहोवा में स्थित तीर्थों में अब भी प्रत्येक वर्ष हज़ारों तीर्थयात्री आते हैं। पिहोवा में सरस्वती तीर्थ को पंजाब और उत्तर पश्चिमी भारत के तीर्थयात्रियों द्वारा गया (बिहार) के समकक्ष माना जाता है। पुरातन काल से सरस्वती के तट पर स्थित कुरुक्षेत्र के तीर्थस्थलों की यात्रा ने कुरुक्षेत्र को विश्व में प्राचीनतम स्थल बनाने में अपनी प्रमुख भूमिका निभाई है। इसी कारण कुरुक्षेत्र को महाभारत में सर्वोच्च तीर्थ भी कहा गया है।

महाभारत युद्ध के समय श्रीकृष्ण के अग्रज बलराम ने सरस्वती नदी पर स्थित तीर्थस्थलों की यात्रा की। महाभारत के अनुसार कुरु वंश का आधिपत्य सरस्वती नदी घाटी के ऊपरी भाग और यादवों का निचले व तटीय क्षेत्र में था। सरस्वती और दृषद्वती के मध्य क्षेत्र को महाभारत और मनुस्मृति में ब्रह्मावर्त भी कहा गया है।

सरस्वती तट पर पिहोवा में स्थित पृथुदक तीर्थ श्राद्धकर्म के लिए विख्यात है। पाण्डवों के वंशज असीम कृष्ण ने सरस्वती तट पर एक दीर्घकालीन सत्र–यज्ञ किया था।

सरस्वती तीर्थ, पिहोवा (कुरुक्षेत्र) के समीप गरीबनाथ डेरा में स्थापित
प्रतिहार राजा मिहिर भोज (836 – 890 ई०) के समय का शिलालेख (882 ई०)

## Religious sites at Kurukshetra

**Brahma Sarovar**: Every year lakhs of people come to take a holy bath at Brahma Sarovar on the occasion of "Somavati Amavasya" and on Solar eclipses. They believe that a bath in the holy Sarovar frees all sins and cycle of birth-death. The

Sarovar is one of Asia's largest man-made ponds. Hindu genealogy registers are kept here.

Legend has it that Brahma Sarovara was excavated first by King Kuru long before the epic battle of Kurukshetra. It is a huge tank (half a kilometer wide and one kilometer long) with an island in the middle connected by a road that cuts through it. On the island is a water well called the Chandra Kupa Well, one of the oldest sacred wells. Tradition has it that in ancient times the water in the well would change to milk during the solar eclipse.

Next to the well is a small Radha-Krishna temple where Yudhisthira is said to have built a victory pillar after the successful culmination of the war. This lake is also where Krishna, His brother Balarama, and His sister Subhadra came from Dwaraka to bathe during an eclipse. Along the side of the tank is a smaller island with the Sarveshwar Mahadeva (Shiva) temple on it.

**Sannihit Sarovar**: The pond is believed to be the meeting point of seven sacred Saraswatis. The Sarovar, according to popular belief, contains sacred water. Bathing in the waters of the tank on the day of Amavasya or on the day of an eclipse bestows blessings equivalent to performing the Ashvamedh Yajna.

Sri Krishna met his friends and residents of Vrindavana here during an eclipse while He was living in Dwaraka. He also took bath in the waters of Brahma Sarovara and Sannihit Sarovara.

It is not as large as Brahma Sarovara, but it is fairly big (1500 by 450 feet). Sannihit means the assembly of the entire range of holy tirthas or sacred sites, which is said to happen every Amavas, or eclipse, especially the Somavati Amavas (lunar eclipse). It is also said that all of the sacred holy places gather

here on the new Moon day, and that this is where the seven sacred Sarasvatis meet.

Performing the shraddha ceremony for the benefit of the ancestors and bathing during the eclipse is said to purify one of all sins and gives the merit of having performed 1,000 ashvamedha yagas. It is also accepted that it was here where Lord Indra accepted the bones from the great sage Dadhichi, which were so powerful that they were used in making a Vajra or thunderbolt for killing the demon Vritasura.

**Jyotisar**: The famous site where Bhagavad Gita was delivered to Arjuna under the tree. The tree of that time is witness to Gita. This is about 10 kilometers north of town. Jyotisar is now a small park with a central banyan tree over a small marble chariot that marks where Krishna sang the Bhagavad-gita and showed Arjuna His universal form. The banyan tree is said to be the same tree as when Krishna and Arjuna were present and, thus, the only living witness to the event.

**Bishma Kund**, also called Bana Ganga. This is where Grandfather Bhishma fell on the tenth day of the battle of Kurukshetra, but remained laying there until the sun entered the northern hemisphere (Uttaryana). As he lay there, he became thirsty and Arjuna shot an arrow into the ground from which sprang Ganges water to quench Bhishma's thirst. This later formed into what is now a small kund or water tank called Bana Ganga, or Bhishma Kund. Bathing in it is said to give the benefits of bathing at all the holy tirthas. This is also where Bishma gave the teachings of Rajadharma and Anushasana (discipline) to Yudhisthira. Bishma also sang the Vishnusahasranama to Lord Krishna before he departed this world.

**Sthaneshwar Mahadev Temple**: This is where Pandavas prayed to Lord Shiva for blessings to be victorious in the war of

Kurukshetra. The water from the tank is considered sacred and to have healing powers. A few drops of the water from the tank is said to have cured King Ban or Vena of leprosy.

According to Vamana Purana, the tirthas of Shukra, Soma, Daksha and Skanda are located in the north, east, south, and west parts respectively of this Sthanu tirtha, but one who visits the linga of Shiva is believed to get moksha or liberation. Vamana Purana also says that whoever enters this Sthanu temple, with or without desires, gets emancipation from all karma.

**Pehowa:** About 40 kilometers from Kurukshetra is the place of Pehowa where the ancient Sarasvati River is commemorated, and is famous for the performance of the shraddha ceremonies for the ancestors. The tirtha of Prithudaka is mentioned in the Puranas and Mahabharata, where Matinara, a king in the Puru lineage, performed many rituals here on the bank of the Sarasvati River, which is now mostly dried up and no longer flows through Kurukshetra as it did during the times of the Mahabharata.

Jind and Safidon are towns where you will find such tirthas as Ram Hridaya where Parashurama performed a spiritual ceremony. At Birhi Kalan near Jind is Varaha Tirtha where Lord Varaha appeared in order to save the earth. Sarp Damam, in Safidon is where Janamejaya, the son of Maharaja Pariksit, performed a fire sacrifice in order to destroy all the snakes after his father was bitten by Takshaka.

**Location:** Located on North Eastern part of Haryana State

**Linking Roads:** Kurukshetra is located on the linking road from National Highway No. 1 through Pipli, a famous town. Kurukshetra is also connected from Pehowa on the Ambala-Hisar National Highway No. 65.

**Postal Code:** 136118 | **Longitude:** 29° 57' 57" North 76° 50' 13" East | **Latitude:** 29.965717° N 76 | **Area:** 48 kos | **Altitude:** 260 m | **Population:** 9,64,261 (census 2011) | **Literacy Rate:** 76.70 % | **STD Code:** 01744 | **Monsoon:** June till September | **Winter:** 7° to 22°C | **Summer:** 35° to 42°C | **Villages:** | **Language:** Hindi, English | **Best season to visit:** All seasons to visit.

## How to reach?

### By Air

Nearest airport is situated at Chandigarh.

### By Rail

An important railway junction, the town's railway station is located between Sector 13 and New Colony. Some of the trains that pass through this station are Shatabadi Express, Amritsar Express, Jhelum Express, Kalka Mail and Himalayan Queen.

### By Road

Haryana Roadways and other State Corporation buses connect Kurukshetra with Delhi, Chandigarh and other important places in Haryana, Punjab and Himachal Pradesh. Haryana Roadways Volvo passes through Kurukshetra. Kurukshetra is connected to all major cities through proper network of roads.

# Origin of Kurukshetra

[Samvarna-Tapati Vivah, King Kuru and Kurukshetra Mahatmya]

At the beginning of Satya Yuga, there was a King named Ruksha (Rksa) of Chandra Vamsha who begot King Samvarna. On assuming Kingship, Samvarna entrusted his royal duties to his Guru Vasishta and moved about carefree. While he was in a forest named Vaibhraja, he met a Deva Kanya called Tapati

and both of them got mesmerized with each other. On return, Vasishta Maharshi learnt of the King's infatuation as the latter was neither eating nor behaving properly. Similar was the situation with the Deva Kanya Tapati.

Vasishta learnt from his Divyadrishti that the Deva Kanya was the daughter of Surya Deva, entered Surya mandala and requested Surya for the alliance and both of them were happily married to eventually beget a boy called Kuru who was eventually married to Devi Soudamini.

After Kuru became the King, Kuru tried all possibilities of endearing his Praja and during his 'Dharma Paalana' or Virtuous Administration, there were no problems of poverty, thefts, misdirected judgments and health limitations and soon became a popular King.

Then he travelled to become more famous and victorious and entered Dvaitavana where he saw the Sacred River Sarasvati which was called Brahma Putri, Harijihva and Sudarshana Janani. He derived extreme happiness and satisfaction in the River and towards north of the River decided to construct a 'Samanta Panchaka Dharmasthaan' spread over an Area of five yojanas width and length.

It was learnt that there were five such 'Vedikaas' where Shambhu Deva performed Pancha Yagnas, of which the Uttara Vedi on the banks of River Sarasvati was known as the most renowned; the Madhya Vedi as popular at Prayaga Kshetra, Purva Vedi was at Gaya Tirtha, Dakshina Vedi was at Jagannatha puri and the Paschima Vedi was at Pushkara Kshetra.

King Kuru decided to add the Panchama Vedi to be constructed as Samantaka Panchaka Dharmasthana. He procured a golden plough and a pair of animals to commence tilling the land. Indra Deva approached the King Kuru as to what was he

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desirous of doing and the reply was that he had decided to construct an 'Ashtaanga Bhumi' of Tapah Satyam Ksamam Damam Krushaami Shoucham Daanam cha Yogamcha Brahmachaaritaam/ or Meditation - Truthfulness-Endurance-Mercy-Cleanliness-Charity-Yoga and Celibacy which should be called Ashtanga Farming!

Indra further asked: Where would be a number of ploughs and how would you procure seeds from! The reply was that Indra should not make fun of an honest endeavour as Indra left quietly. The King himself commenced tilling some four to five yojanas of land daily.

Then Lord Vishnu appeared and asked the same question of Indra as to where would he secure the seeds. The King said convincingly that the seeds would emerge from his body.

Vishnu asked the King to extend his hand so that the former could plough and the King could spread the seeds. The King faithfully extended his right hand and at once Bhagavan cut off his hand with his chakra to several pieces! Kuru then extended his left hand and Vishnu sliced off that hand too to thousand pieces. The King offered his thighs one by one which too were cut. Finally, King Kuru offered his head and then Vishnu was convinced that the King was very serious in his resolve and asked him to ask for a boon.

Kuru replied: Yaavadetan – mayaa krushtam Dharmaksetram tadastucha, Snaataanaam cha mrutaaaamcha mahapunya phalam twiha/ Upavaasamcha Daanamcha cha snaanam japyam cha Madhava, Homayagnadikam cha anyacchubham Vaapyashubham Vibho!

(May this Place which I had tilled be declared as Dharma Kshetra; may this Place become a Sacred one where bathing or even dying attain Maha Punya. May the virtuous deeds of

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Upavaasa-Snaaa-Daana- Japa-Havana-Yagna etc be paid for with multiplied fruits!)

The King further prayed to Vishnu that he along with Parama Shiva should reside at this Kshetra always. Vishnu not only granted the boons asked by the King but also blessed the Hallowed Place to be called as Kuru Kshetra, that his fame and name would be eternal as long as the Universe would last, that this Kshetra called Kurujangala would be protected by Chandra naamak Yaksha, Vaasuki naamak Sarpa, Shankukarna naamak Vidyaadhara, Sukeshi naamak Rakshseswara, Ajaavan naamak King, Mahadeva naamak Agni and so on.

Some eight thousand arrows-men would ensure that sinners of extreme nature would be prevented to perform bathing in the Kshetra; there is a 'paapa vinaashaka' and Sacred Tirtha known as Prithudaka or Pehowa Tirtha here and Brahma collected the waters of various Maha Samudras, Punya Tirthas, Rivers and Sarovaraas into it.

**Brahmasarovara Tirtha**: Maharshi Lomaharshana stated that Brahmasarovara Tirtha was originally spread from Sannihita Sarovar at Rantuk Sthaana to Ojas Sthaana and further upto Chaturmukha Sthaana; but over passage of time, the Tirtha occupied the space from Viswasvara Shaana to Asthipura and from Vriddha Kanya to Oghavati River. Half way of the Tirtha, it was believed that Rudra attained 'Sthaanutva'or 'Sthiratwa' (Solidification).

Meanwhile, Maha Muni Markandeya prayed to Devi Saraswati flowing in the form of the illustrious River obliged the Muni to accompany him wherever he wished him to lead and the Muni requested her to link up Brahmasira to Ramahlada to Kurukshetra and thus the latter assumed further significance;

In the Kurukshetra Tirtha thus one secures the 'maha phala'of bathing and worshipping in Seven Vanaas viz. Kaamuaka Vana,

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Aditi Vana, Vyasa Vana, Phalaki Vana, Surya Vana, Madhu Vana, and Sheeta Vana; besides nine Sacred Rivers viz. Sarasvati, Vaitarani, Aapaga, Mandakini Ganga, Madhstra, Vaasu Nadi, Koushiki, Drushdyati or Kaggar, and Hiranyavati.

Kurukshetra Thirtha Yatra needs to be initiated by obtaining the permission of the Yaksha called Rastuk, proceed to Aditi Vana where Devi Aditi was stated to have performed her Tapasya in favour of her sons viz. Devataas; proceed to Vishnu Sthaan called 'Savana', visit Vimala Tirtha to worship Vimaleswara to reap the fruit of attaining Rudra Loka; Kaushiki Sangama to wash off the blemishes stored thus far; Dharani Tirtha to seek relief for 'Aparadhaas' of devotees; Daksheswara Shiva in Dakshaashrama to attain the fruit of Ashvamedha Yagna; Shalukini Tirtha ; then move on to Saptirdadhi to thrash up fears of serpents; then worship Rastuk Dwarapal for an overnight stay there for Kshama Prarthana and Abheestha Siddhi; then visit Panchanada Tirtha, Koti Tirtha, and Jwaalamaheswara.

Pilgrims to Kurukshetra are advised to definitely perform 'Pitru Devatarchana' at the famed Pushkara Tirtha which was constructed by Parashurama Deva and it was believed that worship there would bestow fulfillment of wishes sought by the devotees. Surya Grahana Snaana at the nearby Sarovara called 'Saannihitya' is stated to provide access to Swarga after one's end of life.

In the Kurukshetra Mahatmya of the Mahabharata the sage Pulastya says that even the dust of Kurukshetra will cause one to reach the highest goal. This is the benefit for all who died in the battle of Kurukshetra 5,000 years ago, and one reason why the battle took place here. It is another reason why every pilgrim should visit this holy place. It is also explained that if a person walks eight miles along the Ganga River, he will acquire the merit of performing one ashwamedha ritual. In Kashi

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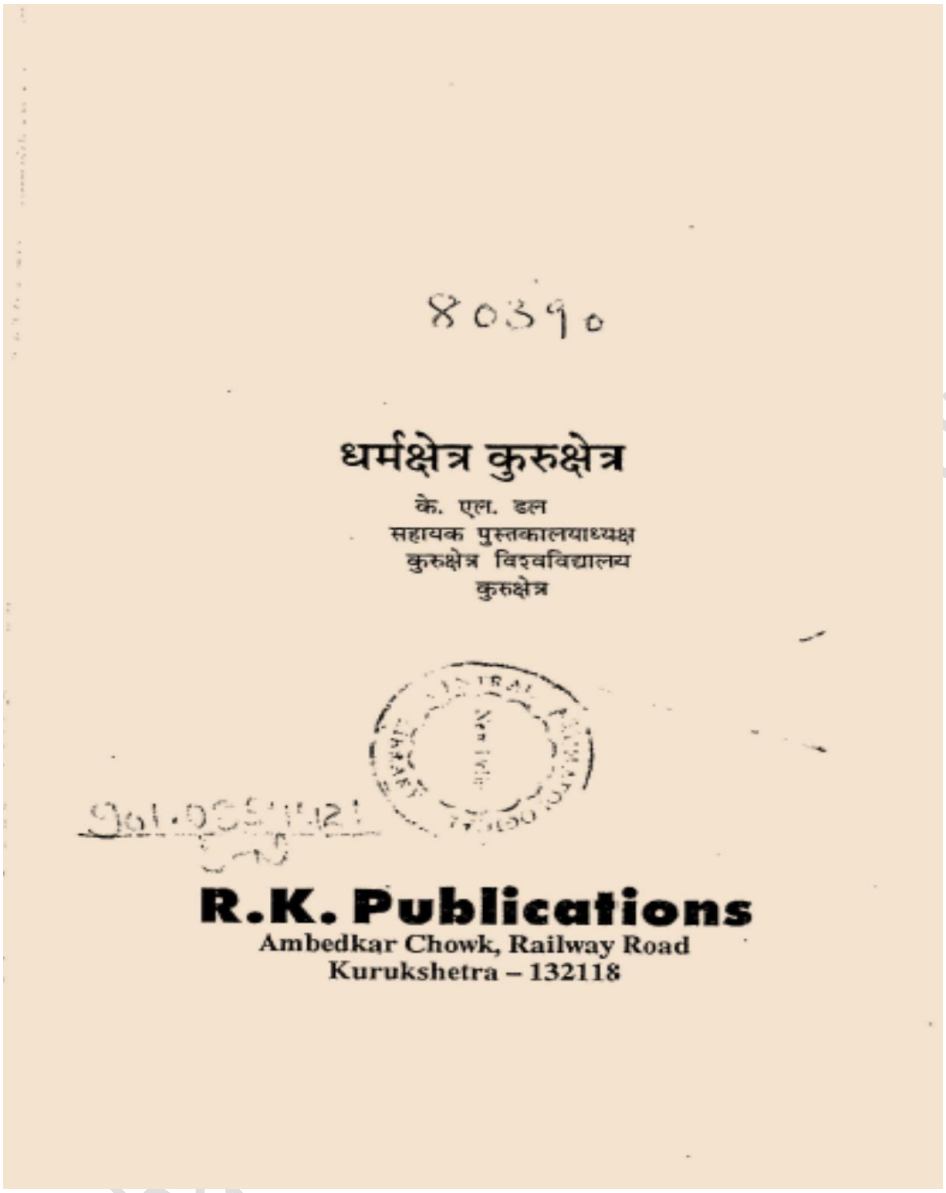
(Varanasi) one gets the same result by walking only four miles, and only two miles when walking in Kurukshetra.

Giving Daana (charity) at Kurukshetra is considered highly meritorious. Attainment of BraHma jnaAna, Gaya sraAddHa, death/termination of life in a Cow shed/in the process of protecting a Cow; residing in Kurukshethra; are mukti-daayak the four major means of Mukti.

Stone Inscription of 5th Century CE in Laos that reads as Kurukshetra Mahatmya

1. Those who live and those who die and those who offer prayers in a great place of pilgrimage (mahatirtha) attain its result (accordingly).
2. Let the same be held by me today, the fruit which is like the relegious merit previously acquired after visiting places like Prabhasa.
3. The gods who have come only for sacrifices and who are (now) ascended in the heaven headed by Brahma, Vishnu and Siva, may suggest name to this place.
4. After making this submission, the king, while he was thinking over it, the name of Kurukshetra struck him. The fore-described religious merit which takes one to the paradise and which is eulogized by the divine sages, the same may be attained in the newly set Kurukshetra.
5. The place became famous as Kurukshetra, the centre of pilgrimage and of great religious merit for the very reason that it was ploughed by the sage Kuru for good people.
6. In the Kurukshetra even a greater sinner is taken to the highest goal (by the particles of dust) deiven by the wind.
7. (He who always says) 'I shall go to Kurukshetra and I shall reside in Kurukshetra' (is freed from sins); those who reside in Kurukshetra are as if residing in heaven.
8. Naimisha is the (best) religious place on earth, Pushkara in the aerial region while Kurukshetra is the most distinguished in all the three worlds.
9. Even if one extols its name the seventh generation of his family (is blessed) then what to say of those religious minded (persons) who stay here ?
10. The religious merit gained by performing a thousand horse sacrifices, and a hundred Vajapeya (or of) a hundred thousand cows duly given; is acquired by those who offer prayers at Kurukshetra, and that too without any motive, obtain that fruit which is not only determinate but also very difficult to attain.
11. May such religious merit which has been described by sages previously be accomplished by many people in this Kurukshetra.
12. The useful merit of thousand-tirthas acquired at Kurukshetra may all that be present here.
13. This place of pilgrimage is said to have extended over half a yojana and those places which are included in it are destroyers of greater sins.
14.Those who die here and those who offer prayers are like persons who quench their thirst by drinking water with great concentration.
15. The fruits acquired by (performing) Agnishtoma sacrifices or by giving great riches, may all that be received by those (who live here).
16. When all great sinners are washed here of all their sins then what to say of those religious people who reside at this great place of pilgrimage?

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**Kurukshetra: A Short Visitor's Guide**
**by Stephen Knapp**
https://www.stephenknapp.info/kurukshetra_a_short_visitors_guide.htm

गीता उपदेश स्थल, ज्योतिसर

गीता
उपदेश
स्थल

(Bhishma Kunda at Kurukshetra)